

ABSTRACT

TITLE OF THE ABSTRACT: Prevalence and correlates of substance use disorders in patients with schizophrenia

DEPARTMENT: PSYCHIATRY

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KEY WORDS:

Schizophrenia, substance use disorders, co-morbidity

AIMS:

To study the prevalence of substance use disorders in patients with schizophrenia and the socio-demographic and clinical correlates.

METHODS:

Consecutive patients with schizophrenia attending the outpatient clinic were recruited. The Positive and Negative Symptom Scale was used to rate symptom severity. Substance use patterns were assessed using Drug Abuse Screening Test, Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test and Fagerstrom's Test for Nicotine Dependence. Socio-demographic and clinical details were recorded. Mean and standard deviation were calculated for continuous variables and frequency distributions for categorical variables; student's t and chi square tests were used to assess the significance of association for continuous and categorical variables respectively.

RESULTS:

The prevalence of substance use was 29.1%; nicotine use was most common, followed by alcohol. Risk factors for substance use were male gender, being employed and a family history of substance use. Alcohol use was associated with a higher dose of antipsychotic medication. Reasons for the use of the substance included the feeling of relaxation it produced, a reduction in stress and anxiety and increase in alertness. None of the participants reported that the substance helped to reduce symptoms or combat adverse effects of medication.